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wherein the flange-shaped portion is inclined relative to the base plate during the forming step; and

wherein the inclination changes as the flange-shaped portion is sequentially pressed by the circular rollers.

REMARKS

Claims 5-7 are pending. Claims 5 and 6 have been rejected and claims 7 indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Claim 7 has been rewritten in independent form as new claim 8. As such, it is now in prima facie condition for allowance.

Both claims 5 and 6 have been rejected as unpatentable over Kanemitsu et al. 5,396,787; claim 5 as anticipated under 35 U.S.C. 102(3), and claim 6 as obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Fig. 4 of the '787 patent discloses a cup-shaped member. This cup-shaped member has a stepped-like portion but this stepped-like portion is not used for thickening the flange portion. In fact, the flange in Fig. 4 is not thickened at all. Claim 5 defines a method by which the flange portion is thickened and formed into a cylindrical shape. Fig. 4 also lacks any teaching of forming the flange into a cylindrical shape.

Claim 5 is, therefore, believed to patentably distinguish over the '787 patent.

Claim 5 has been further amended to clarify that the stepped portion is also formed when the base plate and flange-shaped portions are formed.

Claim 6 depends from claim 5 and should also be allowed.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that claims 5 and 6 be allowed along with claim 8.

Respectfully submitted,



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